



# LEA CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL & GATEWAY LODGE NURSERY

## EYFS POLICY

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### INTENT

At Lea CE Primary School and Gateway Lodge Nursery, we provide a high-quality EYFS education giving children a secure and confident start to their school life. We are committed to nurturing a lifelong love of learning alongside the aims of the EYFS statutory framework. We strive for high standards, equity and inclusion — ensuring that every child, regardless of background or need, is given the right support to succeed. Our provision supports children's health and wellbeing, as recognised by the Herefordshire Council Healthy Tots Award.

We aim to provide the essential knowledge and skills children need to prepare them for their future success and to give children the best possible start to their early education. We provide inviting classroom environments indoors and outdoors to stimulate learners and engage them in developing the three Characteristics of Effective Learning as set out within the EYFS.

We carefully plan our EYFS curriculum to meet the following aims:

- Foster a love of learning which inspires curiosity.
- Provide experiences of awe and wonder.
- Ensure all children have access to high-quality learning opportunities.
- Provide parents/carers with opportunities to develop their child's learning at home.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the community and wider world.
- Support children's safety, welfare and well-being, in line with the strengthened safeguarding requirements in the 2025 framework.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

We deliver a curriculum and continuous provision that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to each child's developmental stage, interests and experiences.

We promote children's health and wellbeing through high-quality provision and practices, in line with the EYFS framework. Our commitment to health is recognised through the Herefordshire Council Healthy Tots Award, which demonstrates our dedication to providing a safe, nurturing, and healthy environment for every child.

- Quality-first teaching across all areas of the curriculum.
- Stimulating learning environments indoors and outdoors.
- Well-planned and organised continuous provision which allows children to learn through play.
- A carefully planned balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities.
- We promote a love of learning through real life experiences and opportunities to build on prior learning.
- Close links with local nurseries which support a smooth and settled transition into school.
- Strong parental partnerships which empower all families, recognising and celebrating diversity and supporting equity of access to learning at home.
- Systematic approaches to teaching reading to ensure all children learn to read. Children begin building the foundations for phonics in Nursery, before moving to more formal phonics learning in Reception. We offer opportunities for children and families to develop a love of reading.
- Planned opportunities for outdoor learning through 'Forest Schools' and in the outdoor classroom.
- Safeguarding and welfare policies that reflect the new requirements of the EYFS Framework 2025 – including safer recruitment, more than two emergency contacts, timely follow-up of prolonged absences, safer eating supervision, privacy in toileting/nappy-changing, whistleblowing and paediatric first aid training for all staff in ratios.

## **IMPACT**

- High levels of engagement and motivation demonstrated by children, which support them to become lifelong learners.
- Confident and capable readers who demonstrate a love of reading.
- Evidence of strong links with parents.
- Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Children feel happy and safe and enjoy coming to school.
- All children access a balanced and challenging curriculum.
- Children make strong and equitable progress from their individual starting points and are offered a broad curriculum which meets each child's unique needs. We monitor attainment and engagement to ensure every child has an equal and fair opportunity to succeed.
- Children are supported by adults that are well trained and passionate about providing the best education for every child.
- Children develop strong foundations in health, wellbeing, and self-care. Our achievement of the Herefordshire Council Healthy Tots Award reflects our success in supporting children to adopt healthy habits and thrive in all areas of learning.
- The setting ensures that safeguarding and welfare procedures meet the strengthened statutory expectations of the EYFS Framework from September 2025 and underpin an environment in which children can thrive.

### **The EYFS Statutory Framework**

Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Learning in the EYFS: Play, Scaffolding, Modelling, Observing, Guided Learning, Direct Teaching**

In our EYFS environments, you may see children playing alone or with their peers, deciding on resources and choosing how to spend their time. You may see a child playing and listening to an adult, who is modelling how to achieve something or teaching a new skill that interests the child.

Adults may scaffold a child's play. This involves taking their play to higher levels of learning,

entering the play as a co-creator and helping to provoke a framework for the children to go from “what they know” to “what else they could know”. Scaffolding enables a child to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which is just beyond his or her abilities. During play, where foundational social and emotional skills are developed, scaffolding is a bridge to new skill levels using three key ingredients: modelling the skill, giving clues and asking questions while the child is trying out a new skill, and then as the child approaches mastery, withdrawing the support.

The EYFS statutory framework does not prescribe a particular teaching approach.

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.”

At Lea CE Primary School and Gateway Lodge Nursery, the EYFS teachers carefully plan what the children learn, and through the provision enable them to learn from their interests, alongside extending their knowledge and understanding through direct teaching. Each day, we inspire children’s interests, respond to each child’s emerging needs and guide their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.

As the children develop and their skills progress throughout the Reception year, we use more direct teaching and modelling and plan specific sequences of lessons. These strategies help us to focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning so that the children can develop the skills and confidence required for the end of their Reception year.

## **Key Features of Effective Practice**

### **The Best for Every Child**

- All children will be given an equal chance of success.
- We ensure that all children have access to high-quality early education. We pay particular attention to those children from disadvantaged backgrounds to ensure we can ‘narrow the gap’.
- We provide high-quality early education and care which is inclusive for all children. Children’s special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.
- We maintain systems and policies to meet the strengthened safeguarding and welfare expectations of the 2025 framework (such as emergency contacts, recruitment references, attendance monitoring).

### **High-Quality Care**

- Our practitioners ensure the children’s experience is the central focus of thinking.
- We ensure our young children are well cared for to enable them to thrive.

- High-quality care is consistent. All practitioners enjoy spending time with young children and this is reflected in their interactions with children.
- Practitioners are responsive to children and ensure they form effective and positive relationships with all children.
- Practitioners support children to develop their independence.

### The Curriculum

- Our curriculum reflects the diversity of our community and ensures equitable opportunities for all children to see themselves represented in what they learn.
- We ensure planning helps every child to develop their language skills.
- The curriculum is ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time.
- Planning is flexible to ensure children’s interests are used to drive the children’s learning and development.
- We ensure that depth in early learning is achieved through spending time embedding the children’s learning.
- We ensure the curriculum addresses the knowledge and skills children need by the end of Foundation Stage.

**Three prime areas** of development and learning lay vital foundations in the early years.

The three prime areas are: Communication & Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social, Emotional Development.

The **four specific areas** are: **Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World** and **Creative Arts & Design**, which build on the development gained through the prime areas.



## **Pedagogy**

- Every child is enabled to make progress in their learning, with the right help.
- We utilise different approaches to learning to ensure all children make progress. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.
- Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play.
- Children in our settings also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning.
- As the children develop throughout the year they are given more guided learning.
- We have a well-planned learning environment, indoors and outdoors.

## **Assessment**

- Our assessment practices are equitable, recognising that every child's developmental journey is unique.
- Assessments are completed to inform planning and support the practitioners in identifying children who need additional support.
- Assessment is based upon a secure knowledge of child development.
- Practitioners have a clear expectation about what children need to know and how best to support them in developing their learning.
- Accurate assessment is used to highlight whether a child has a special educational need or needs extra help.
- The assessment and reporting arrangements reflect the statutory requirements under the EYFS framework (including the updated arrangements for the Reception Baseline Assessment and the digital elements for 2025/26).

## **Self-Regulation**

As part of our Personal, Social & Emotional Development teaching provision we support each child's ability to:

- hold information in mind
- focus their attention
- think flexibly
- control impulsive behaviour

These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:

- to concentrate their thinking
- to plan what to do next
- to monitor what they are doing and adapt
- to regulate strong feelings
- to be patient and be able to wait for what they want
- to bounce back when things get difficult.

## **Partnership with Parents**

- We ensure that we have a strong and respectful partnership with parents, which enables children to thrive. We value every family's voice and work to remove barriers so that all parents and carers can engage equitably in their child's early education.
- Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning and development at home as this has a significant impact on their child's learning.
- We take time to get to know and understand the children and their families enabling us to offer support as needed.
- Pre-school children are invited into school for several 'stay and play' sessions prior to starting school. This gives them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the classroom environment and adults working in the class.
- Towards the end of the summer term, we hold a transition evening to which all parents and children are invited. This is held in the classroom and is an opportunity for the teacher to share information and for parents to ask questions and explore the classroom environment with their children.
- Towards the middle of September, we hold a phase 2 phonics workshop for Reception parents. This is an opportunity for them to find out about how we teach phonics and how they can support their child at home. A further workshop is held in January, to introduce phase 3.
- Parents/carers are given the opportunity throughout the year to engage in the wider school community.
- Parents/carers are fully involved in their child's learning and development through information/photos shared via emails and the class web-page.
- Parents are invited into school for regular parents' evenings to provide an update about their child's learning and progress.
- Children with SEND or additional needs have in-depth 'shared conversations' to ensure targets and progress are shared.
- We are flexible in our approach to communicating with parents/carers and adapt our communication methods to suit different preferences.

## **Safeguarding & Welfare**

In line with the updated EYFS statutory framework effective from 1 September 2025, the setting ensures that:

- Our recruitment practices require references to be obtained before employment of new staff.

- We maintain an attendance policy, and in cases of unexplained or prolonged absence we follow up with parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts. We hold more than two emergency contacts for each child.
  - Children’s mealtimes and snacks are supervised so that children are within sight and hearing of a staff member and safe eating practices (including choking prevention and dietary/allergy checks) are in place.
  - Our staff training includes safeguarding training meeting the criteria set out in the Safeguarding Training Annex (Annex C) of the EYFS, and our policy details how this training is delivered and applied. DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) terminology is used in place of “Lead practitioner”.
  - Toileting and intimate care procedures ensure children’s privacy is respected, while maintaining appropriate supervision and safeguarding.
  - The setting supports whistleblowing procedures and ensures staff know how to raise concerns internally and externally.
  - Trainees and students who are included in the staff: child ratio must hold valid paediatric first aid (PFA) training appropriate to their role.
  - Nutrition guidance is considered and applied: the setting follows the non-statutory nutrition guidance linked to the EYFS.
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